

# Ten Ways State SNAP Programs Can Support New Health Insurance Opportunities

As millions of Americans become eligible for health insurance in 2014, state-administered Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) can play a vital role in making sure people learn how to get coverage and how to get help applying. Many states have traditionally linked eligible SNAP participants to Medicaid and making this connection will be more important than ever, given new coverage opportunities.

Beginning in 2014, millions more SNAP participants who do not have health insurance will be able to get it. The new Health Insurance Marketplace is the place to find information about how to apply for coverage, including Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Open enrollment begins October 1, 2013; as always, individuals may apply for Medicaid or CHIP at any time.

**Here's how SNAP programs can support new health insurance opportunities:**

## **Make Health Coverage Enrollment Easy**

- 1. Work with your state Medicaid agency to learn how SNAP can help simplify health coverage enrollment and renewal.**

Strategies that include data-matching arrangements between SNAP and Medicaid can streamline enrollment and renewal in Medicaid for SNAP participants.

- 2. Work with your state Medicaid agency to make small changes to your state's "multi-benefit" application so SNAP applicants can apply for health coverage when they apply for food assistance.**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) can help you understand what changes might be needed. CMS must approve alternative applications, and the state must still have an application that is used only for health insurances.

## **Spread the Word**

- 3. Offer information about health insurance opportunities in SNAP offices and on SNAP program websites.**

Display consumer materials from **HealthCare.gov** explaining the basics of Medicaid, CHIP and coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Place them in local SNAP agency waiting rooms. Post the **HealthCare.gov** widget on the SNAP agency website.

- 4. Put information where SNAP participants shop for food.**

Work with grocery stores and farmers markets that accept SNAP benefits to make health insurance flyers and brochures available to shoppers.

- 5. Provide health coverage information when EBT cards are distributed.**

Print the **HealthCare.gov** web address and Health Insurance Marketplace Call Center toll-free number on materials sent to SNAP participants with EBT cards and on transaction receipts. Include information about where to find help applying for health coverage.

**6. Include health coverage messages on telephone helplines for SNAP participants.**

Encourage customer helplines to refer callers to the toll-free number for help applying for health insurance.

**7. Talk about health insurance opportunities during SNAP nutrition education sessions and job search training.**

These activities provide an opportunity to give basic information and answer questions. Work with state health care agencies or community organizations that deliver health care services to get current, reliable information on eligibility and how to get help applying.

## **Help SNAP Participants Apply for Health Coverage**

**8. Encourage groups that provide SNAP application assistance to also offer help with health insurance applications.**

Steer these organizations to consumer assistance resources and provide technical assistance with appropriate cost-allocation practices.

**9. Connect food banks, food pantries, and congregate meal sites to health insurance application assistance.**

Partner with organizations that can send trained helpers to assist with health insurance applications. All states will have online applications, and people will also be able to apply by phone, by mail or in person.

## **Promote Promising Practices**

**10. Share successful ideas.**

Collect strategies SNAP offices are using to inform participants and their families about health insurance. Present promising practices in statewide training sessions and through channels that reach other states' nutrition assistance programs. Include successful approaches in state administrative manuals.

## **For more information about the Marketplace**

Visit **HealthCare.gov**, or call the Health Insurance Marketplace Call Center at **1-800-318-2596**. TTY users should call 1-855-889-4325.

Visit **Marketplace.cms.gov** for Marketplace widgets and badges and other partner materials.